per contra —

extract — (copied by Mary Davis) Edward M. Davis

W. L. Garrison to E. M. D.

Boston — Jan. 8th — 1838 —

My dear friend

× × × × × In advocating the cause of emancipation, my endeavor has been to speak the truth of God in its simplicity and power: not to indulge in defamation, or to deal out flattery; not to conceal our danger, or to gild our crimes. I cannot patiently argue the question of slavery, as a matter of uncertainty as to its exact turpitude. While the chains of millions of my enslaved countrymen are clanking in my ears, and their cries are disturbing the repose of the nation, and I know that their bodies and spirits (which are God's) are daily sold under the hammer of the Auctioneer as articles of merchandize, I need no nice adjustment of abstractions, no metaphysical reasonings, to convince me that such scenes are dreadful, and such practices impious. All that belongs to my manhood, all that is nature within me, my whole animal and spiritual organization, settles the question instantly. × × × × × ×

But I do say, that those pharisaical cavillers at the language, spirit,

and measures of the abolitionists; those affectedly judicious and moderate souls, who manifest that they have no flesh in them for the slaves at the South, and whose sympathies are all on the side of the slaveholders; they know that it is nothing but the sable hue of the skin, and the crisped hair of the victims, that make all the difference between the propriety of our conduct as abolitionists, and that of our revolutionary fathers, which they applaud. Now, if in seeking to break the fetters of our colored countrymen, we had resorted to violence, instead of argument entreaty and rebuke; if we had stimulated the slaves to revolt, and assert their rights at all hazards; if we had held up before their eyes the example of Washington and Lafayette, who could justly have reproached us? — Surely not those who talk exultingly of Bunker Hill; not those who believe that it is glorious to die in the cause of liberty on the battle-field. But, thanks be to God, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual."

Yours in eternal hostility to every form of oppression.

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.